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New Games Begin. The section of Ancient Hebrew Kingdom Diplomacy has filled, and players were notified some days ago. I've not yet got a Liller Number for this, but it ought to be here by next ish.

And Section Two of Black Hole Diplomacy has filled; since the completion of the game list seems to have coincided with an issue of Rename (oh...you noticed), youse guys don't get a Greeterpillar. This game will operate in the same manner as Section One; rules (there aren't many) can be found in Greeterpillar #3, which only one of you has. Therefore, I reprint them here.

1. Standard 1971 rulebook and Grendel Press House rules apply except as hereinafter modified.

2. After every spring and fall move, complete with retreats (but excluding builds/removals), the Gamesmaster will draw the name of one of the seventy-five provinces on the board at random. This province immediately ceases to exist. If a unit stands in the province at the time, said unit is annihilated. If the province is a supply centre, the centre is removed from the board and the total centres drops by one; the owner of said centre also loses credit for it on the following fall move. Units so destroyed may be rebuilt, if otherwise possible under the regular rules, on the following fall build turn.

The effect on the board of a black-holed province can best be illustrated by noting that Switzerland is effectively a black-holed province in the normal game.

3. Prophetic retreats are required. That is, with each spring and fall move retreat orders must be included for the same season. If a dislodged unit has no retreat specified by the player, the Gamesmaster will order a retreat in the following manner: Measuring from the geographic centre of the province from which the retreat must be made, the unit will retreat to the first province to the north; if that is not possible, then the first available province moving in a counter-clockwise direction.

4. Victory criterion for Black Hole Diplomacy is a majority of units on the board and control of a majority of the then-extant supply centres. Note that victory can thus occur on a spring move as well as on a fall.

5. Each player is entitled to designate, with his Spring 1901 moves, one of his home supply centres (his choice) immune from black-holing. If no preference is indicated, the Gamesmaster will pick one. This decision cannot be changed during the game except under one very specific condition, to wit: If one of a player's non-exempt centres has been black-holed and the exempt centre is owned by a foreign power, the player may change immunity to the third centre. (In the case of Russia, substitute the numbers 'two' and 'fourth' in that sentence.) This change of exemption may only occur under these conditions and may only be accomplished once.

Those are the rules; they apply to both Black Hole games. Any player in either section who does not have the Grandel Press House Rules (1 April 1973 edition), please write for a copy immediately. You should all have them, but you never know....

And now - Black Hole Two.

- Austria: David Staples, Rt. 1, Box 120, Fargo, N.D. 58102.
- England: Howard Johnson, Rt. 2 Box 146, Glyndon, MN. 56547.
- France^{**}: Randolph Bart, 18249 Donnets St., Northridge, CA. 91334.
- Germany: David DeLuca, 1111 Kendall St., Port Alberni, B.C., Canada.
- Italy: John Hendry, 17 Price Road, Peabody, MA. 01960.
- Russia: Harry Drews, 110 Lancheater Rd., Kitchener, Ontario, Canada
N2B 1A8.
- Turkey: Robert Nielsen, 17 Turner Street, Greene, N.Y. 13778.

^{**} Mr. Bart insists on calling his country UFFERIKON - United Federal People's Democratic Republic of the Inner Kingdom of Outer Nowhere. This is fine with me, though I'll probably put some reference to 'France' in official tabulations just-for the sake of the other players' convenience.

I strongly recommend the use of air mail to the two Canadians. First class is quite slow at times. Same rate as U.S. domestic. (This recommendation is also reversible.)

The deadline for Spring 1901 moves and exemption declarations is three weeks from today - 2 June 1973. Take it away....

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For those onlookers who care to know, one issue in advance of the beginning, the players for the AHKD game are: Rob Nielsen (Judah); Joel Klein (Gad); East Lanasseh (John Siehl); Mark Weidmark (West Lanasseh). Somehow I think I reversed one of those....

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Game 1973Pdr - Black Hole Diplomacy, Section One - Spring 1901

A dollar to a doughnut says that everyone looks at the end of the moves for our first 'poof' before they read the moves.

The vote to exclude 1901 from Black-Holing was one yes, six no. Kerplow goes the motion.

I'd not considered the matter in advance of whether to announce home centre exemptions or keep them secret. Had I thought of it last round I'd have called a vote; as it is, I'll be arbitrary and announce them. They are: Austria, Vienna; England, London; France, Larseilles; Germany, Kiel; Italy, Rome; Russia, Moscow; Turkey, Smyrna. Intriguing; only three of the seven capitals chosen! (Any idiot who writes me a note saying FOUR capitals is gonna get a scathing letter about what the capital of Russia was in 1901.)

Okay, the moves:

Austria (Weidmark): a vic-gal. a bud-ser. f tri-alb.
England (Hull): a lvp-yor. f edi- nwg. f lon-nth.
France (Keller): a par-pic. a nar-spa. f bre-mid.
Germany (Klein): a ber-kie. a mun-ruh. f kie-holl.
Italy (Bart): a ven-tri. a rom-ven. f nap-ion.
Russia (Cusack): a mos-ukr. a war-gal. f stp se - gboth. f sev-rum.
Turkey (Scott): a smy (h). a con-bul. f ank-con.

It's just as well there are no retreats, because nobody sent any conditional ones. (In addition, Randolph Bart promised to resign if he had any retreats to make. I'm sure he really didn't mean it, he was probably just mouthing off...)

And now, the big news...the province selected from my magic bin of province names is.....(take a breath, guys, you're turning blue)... oh hell, I dropped the slips all over the floor. well, I guess I can't draw one after all. Sorry.

Fall 1901 loves are due Saturday, 2 June 1973.

Hmmm...that wasn't nice, was it? Okay - the one I drew is Livonia. Boom! Sorry, Blair.

Not really a very interesting hole in the board; maybe next time it'll be a bit more gory.

LOSCOW: In accordance with what all Russian diplomats have said, Russia has moved in her defense; no nations had reason to believe Russia promised to move another way, now had they?

PARIS: Paris is in a panic. Today officials released word that Switzerland has disappeared. Rumors are rife. The military is on full alert and all units are on their way to their assigned stations.

King Orips is consulting with cabinet heads and leading astrologers. Marshal Bodin issued a statement accusing an unnamed power of using some unknown force to further their undisclosed purpose. Louis Brogan interviewed Mr. Shew of the Institute of Psychic Phenomena. Dr. Shew and

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several assistants are leaving for Salford shortly for first-hand investigation.

ROME (2 Jan. 1901): The Royal Government of Italy announced today that a defense system, to make the city invulnerable to nuclear attack, will be built around the capital, Rome. The work will be completed long before this summer's black hole season.

JALUL: And not a moment too soon, either. According to my map, the season only missed you by 4,551 miles.

VENICE (15 Jan. 1901): Six rioters, who were arrested here last week for protesting the designation of Rome as indestructable, were hanged today after yesterday's disclosure that all were of Austrian citizenship.

GENOA (21 Feb. 1901): King Randolph XVII wishes to thank the anonymous person who sent me advice; however, none of my units borders on Hell.

ENGLAND TO EVERYBODY: I would like to propose another rule. All in favor please send a dead rat to Conrad. The Rule: That Jamal be the first to be Black-Holed, and San Diego the second. (Conrad, please send any dead rats you receive to Tangelo. He'll really appreciate them.)

JALUL: Well, you came close; black hole season only missed us by 151 miles. Sorry 'bout that, Ozanard.

LATE NEWS FLASH from the London Daily Times: A strange saucer-shaped vehicle has been spotted by the London Observatory orbiting the Earth. It has been rumored that this space vehicle has a deadly ray gun which can completely obliterate large masses of land. Another rumor is that the United States has already been wiped out, but this has not been confirmed as no communication has been established in the last 24 hours with the U.S. If this could be true, the armies of the world had best unite so that we may all try to conquer this invader from outer space. King Richard has already sent fleets to visit other nations to try to gain their support in this common effort.

King Richard made the following statement: "It is well known to me that fighting was soon to break out in the Balkans and in the Low Countries, but I would like to urge all participants in these petty wars to forget their hostilities and unite to fight these alien invaders. I will not be able to sleep nights until this menace is stopped, and I know my teddy will miss me."

JALUL: Alliance hell! What you need is Sominex and Sigmund.

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Oline Game Players: Yesterday I received a gorgeous and highly printable master map from Charles Sharp. I'll get the work done pronto, and send the long-awaited new maps with the next ish. My deepest thanks to my good buddy and honored cartographer.

Game 1972Ydf - Cline Nine-Man Diplomacy - Fall 1902 Builds

- Austria (Reinsel): a gal /r/ vie. f gro /r/ ion. Has: a's rum, ser, sil, vie; f-ion (5).
- England (Osmanson): Build f edi. Has: a nwy; f's edi, nth, nwg, den (5).
- Barbary (Potter): Build f tun. Has: a eth; f's-tun, egy, wmed, ind, gsuez (6).
- France (winter): Has: a's tyo, bur, pic, bel, mar; f spa so (6).
- Germany (Cusack): Removes f helg. Has: a's kie, ruh, mun (3).
- Italy (Biehl): Has: a's ven, pied; f's nap, apu, tyn (5).
- Persia (Naus): Has: a ara, a arm, f jor wa (3).
- Russia (Forester): f rum /r/ o.t.b., thus has one build. Build a sev. Has: a's sev, ukr, swe, gal, war; f ber (6).
- Turkey (Lorrison): Build f con. Has: a bul; f's con, leb, gre, ank, amed (6).

And the board is now at full 45-unit strength. Spring 1902 moves due Saturday, 2 June 1973. (On file for Turkey only.)
Press follows the next game report.

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Have you ever wondered what separates 'beginning-game' from 'mid-game,' and 'mid-game' from 'end-game?' Well, of course, this is a highly variable matter, but a rough definition that I use is this: Early-game stops at that point when all supply centres are owned. Mid-game stops when (in regular Dippy) the first country arrives at 13 centres, and/or the second country arrives at 10. There are, it is obvious, exceptional cases.

So extending these definitions to the Cline Game, early-game has the same delineation, and mid-game ends when the first power has 18 centres and/or the second has 14.

These definitions are, in practical terms, virtually useless.

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Game 1972AFdf - Cline Nine-Man Diplomacy - Fall 1902 Builds

- Austria (Sharp): Build a vie, a tri. Has: a's bul, ser, war, vie, tri; f's alb, gre (7).
- Barbary (Forester): Build f mor. Has: a eth; f's mor, lib, spa so, watl, wmed (6).
- England (Lorrison): f nwy /r/ bar. Has: a wal; f's iri, swe, bar (4).
- France (Reinsel): a spa /r/ gas. No removal was required; sorry 'bout that. Has: a's bel, gas, pic; f mid (4).
- Germany (DeLuca): Has: a's holl, ruh, mun, ber; f den (5).
- Italy (Redlack): Build f nap. Has: a's mar, pied; f's nap, amed, ion, glyo (6).

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Borgia (Naus): Build a iran. Has: a's egypt, arm, geo, iran; f crete (5).

Russia (Ricci): Has: a's stp, rum, mwy; f's bal, sov (5).

Turkey (Greenwell): Remove a con. Has: f's bla, ank, aeg (3).

And this game is up to 45 strength also. Spring 1903 Loves due Saturday, 2 June 1973.

Press for AFdf follows press for Ydf.

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Press for 1972Ydf

ROME (Dec. 1, 1902): "This is Carlo Radrizzo for ROMA News. The government of Prime Minister Antonio Lontis in an uproar following Foreign Minister Serao's disclosure of Ravenna Company (the Italian intelligence network) documents. The documents, Serao claimed, prove the suspected military alliance among the French, English and Arabs of North Africa. Serao, in a government broadcast, appealed to all nations to cast aside their grievances to meet the military menace of the WEST THREE. This afternoon Carlo Serao resigned from the cabinet after Prime Minister Lonti demanded he do so. At 3 p.m. Lonti met with the Ambassadors of Great Britain, France and the Barbary States, who had come to demand an explanation of Serao's charges. It could not have gone unnoticed that a military attache accompanied each Ambassador. Later in the afternoon the recriminations and a fresh crisis loomed. Ambassador to Germany Roberto Serao, already preparing to leave for Rome due to the military situation there, was recalled immediately by wire. Shortly before dinner the government newspapers reported that King Carlo V had signed a general mobilization order and that General Braeco had begun mobilization of the Roma and the Po armies to garrison the Tyrolean-Venetian mountain passes. The Prime Minister moved quickly to convene the National Assembly where he was given a vote of confidence. Roma's police chief was then ordered to place ex-minister Carlo Serao under house arrest. By 10:00 p.m. the King arrived at the Assembly and was coerced into cancelling the general mobilization and to placing Braeco under arrest pending court martial. The Prime Minister could not be reached for comment.

JAMUL: Don't forget, only 24 more governmental crisis days to Christmas.

BERDEAUX (Dec. 24, 1902): It was learned today that Emperor Frederick II sent a sharply worded note of protest to the European War Games and Fair Adjudication Society (EWGFAS), meeting in the San Diego of the east, Geneva, Switzerland. The Emperor demanded that the name of the society be changed to European Catechism and Fair Excommunication Society (ECFES) and that a neutral person be appointed to lead it, saying, "Doesn't von Letzke sound like too much of a German name for someone in charge of a Franco-German war?" Reporters fear a crisis.

(More)

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BORDEAUX (Dec. 25, MCMII): Emperor Phrederick II today crowned himself temporary Pope because of 'new evidence' linking Cardinal Farnese with a plot to kidnap the real Pope. This 'new evidence' was said to be the fact that the Italian units held last turn. "Obviously," said the Emperor-Pope, "His Holiness didn't sign the orders and thus they were not accepted. Therefore, we have taken over the Church until Cardinal Farnese is exposed."

JAMUL: That may be a while; the guy has a thing about nudity....

LETZ, France: The name of the town of Letz was changed to Phred, in honor of His Excellency and to show the SCFSS that the Emperor-Pope means business.

JAMUL: You may get some objections on that one; had you checked your map to see who owned Letz in 1902?

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Press for 1972AFdf

PARIS: Help!

Ankara: Who is this Agis?

Smyrna: The only Agis in Turkey is that guy who set up the Kite Corps and directed the recent attack upon the Great Brown One.

Constantinople: You don't mean Spiro Agis by any chance - our local Austrian anti-Persian agitator?

Ankara: Yes.

Constantinople: But he's working for us. Why, today he came up with what will probably prove to be the greatest advance in warfare since gunpowder.

Smyrna: Not the dreaded 'Nauseous Bomb!'

Constantinople: No, the dreaded 'Dye-removal Bomb' which is the only counter-weapon to the 'Dye-Bomb.'

Ankara: Personally, I would prefer the Nauseous Bomb since I have got a back-stabbing Naus upon my back.

Smyrna: No, the anti-Dye Bomb should be a highly profitable product since I notice that the 'Red Plague' has just spread into Russia....

Ankara: How about that? Laybe Ricci will listen to us now....

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Comment

On the next page is a comment submitted by Reg Forester in his position as the Barbary player in 1972AFdf. He also sent one written from his point of view as Russia in 1972AFdf which I'll hold to next issue - my time is at a premium this weekend.

As the player for Barbary in 72A Ydf (I guess that makes me the game barbarian), I'd like to make a few comments on the game thus far.

Bob Cline has suggested the addition of the Antarctic Ocean, bordering but not separating the West Atl. from the Indian. I'd like to support that suggestion. As the situation is now, any conflict with Persia and Barbary in the southern seas can dilate into a stalemate with a Barbary Fleet holding in West Atl., and thus stopping any attempt by Persia to enter the western seas. The reverse is also true. For Persia, the present situation involves having to place a fleet in the Indian Ocean sheerly for the purpose of a static defence, in order to protect two obviously vulnerable supply centres (Arabia, Iran). Barbary must do the same, of course, to protect one centre (Canary). But I think the danger is for the Persians. Barbary can station a fleet in South Atl., and thereby cut the Med. and Morocco off from any Persian attack. A concentration of two fleets in South Atl. and S. Med. would permanently cut the Persians out. However, in the Indian Ocean, should Barbary get in, there is a great deal more mobility and target area. An enemy fleet can go to the Persian Gulf, or better the Suez, and exert tremendous pressure on up to three Persian centres - all with one fleet! This would necessitate the Persians occupying every one of their home centres to be guaranteed relative safety.

Thus, I think the dice are a little loaded in this particular area for Barbary. I would like to see the Antarctic added so that a commitment could be readily seen, and acted upon, by either party. Personally, although it wasn't mentioned by Bob, I would favour the addition of the Cape of Good Hope, separating the West Atl. and Indian and bordering the Antarctic. This would tend to prevent the blitzkrieg presently possible for both Barbary and Persia. I may be criticized for suggesting a concentration of forces this far south, but I think the Cape of Good Hope would act as a deterrent to the 'cheap' attack presently tempting all involved parties in these games. Thus, a thought-out decision would have to be made to fight each other in the south. Personally, if I were the one thinking that kind of war out, I'd forget it, because I'd be stripping the northern seas of all offence and defence.

-- H.A. Forester

((Your Gamesmaster is pretty much in agreement; take one look at the Barbary blitz in Ydf and you'll see some rather sharp evidence. Feedback welcomed, encouraged and all but lusted after!))

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"This is a hell of a thing!, fumed Moeshoeshoecus, the faithful Nez Perce slave, stuffing us down in this god-forsaken corner of the magazine."

"So what?, flared Hannibal, I need a little solitude to concentrate on my rowing, and I get little enough with you around as it is."

"You're right, noted Hamilcar, he has been eating and is quite around."

"I've no comment, said Masdrabal, clearing his eyes."